Lutheran World Service (India)

THE VOICE OF THE POOR

ANNUAL REPORT 1980

Annual Report 1980

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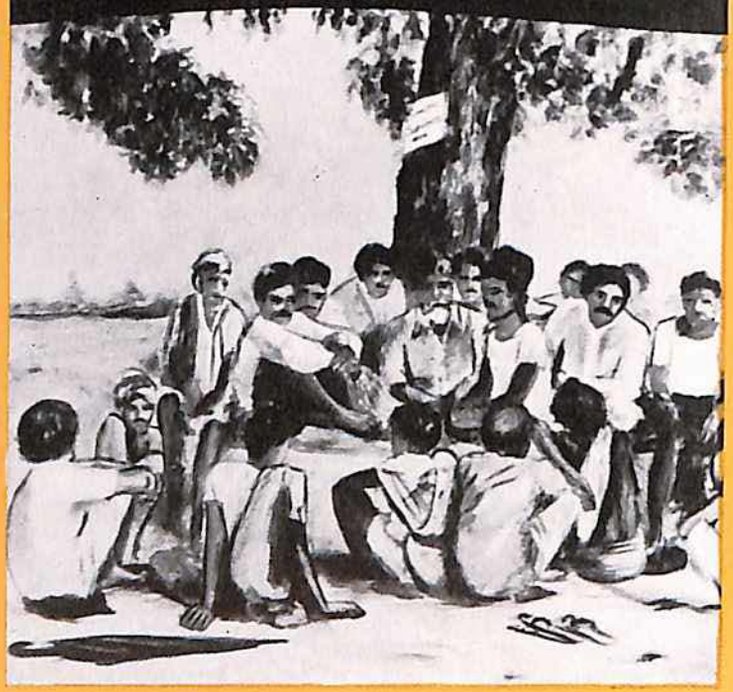

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Introduction . . .

This is the Sixth Annual Report of the Lutheran World Service (India). As a theme for this report we have selected, "The Voice of the Poor," as the needs of the poor are becoming more distinctly articulated and vocalised, whether in the housing resettlement programme, self-employment centres, or community development projects, compelling greater attention—the appeal to be heard!

As a philanthropic organisation it becomes our privilege to listen to the voice of the poor and be able to cooperate with and assist them in their pursuit of self-reliant growth.

A former President of the Lutheran World Federation, Geneva, once said, "Christian love will take place when assistance will no longer be possible without reducing the consumption of the more fortunate. This day may come sooner than we expect." This actually means that the more fortunate must share with the less fortunate, rather than isolate themselves and keep for themselves the best of Life. We can no longer ignore the voice of the poor or leave them in impoverished isolation.

If "development" means, "development of the people," it is important for us to create an atmosphere for the poor to identify the problems they face; find solutions to these problems with the means available and thereafter work jointly to alleviate these problems, in order to attain self-reliance. It is important to pay heed to the voice of the poor and work with them instead of for them.

During 1980 the LWS (India) was able to witness the Colony Committees, Village Councils and apex Bodies playing a major role in the development of their communities. Greater emphasis was given to strengthening such Bodies.

Martin Luther said, "A person does not live for himself alone in this mortal body as if to work for it alone; he lives for all men on earth; he lives solely for others and not for himself." If we try not to live for ourselves alone we should be able to share with and care for those less fortunate than ourselves, whoever they are and wherever they are.

Our thanks go out to all those who have helped us not only to hear the voice of the poor but to cooperate with and encourage them to promote their development objectives. This assistance has not been and is not in vain. We have met with cooperation from among the people we try to assist, understanding and support from the Government, our headquarters in Geneva and our Donor Agencies.

Olav Hodne

January, 1981

OLAV HODNE

Comparative Study

• exploitation of the tribals by money lenders was maximum	• exploitation is practically 'nil' at present
• literacy rate was less than 2%	• it is now 12.27%
• medical facilities never existed	• there is a health centre supported by mobile clinics and there are 11 trained local personnel engaged in community health work
• in local Government Bodies (Panchayats) the tribals had no representation	• they have now elected their own people for all the Panchayat seats
• the whole area was mono cropped	• it is now a multiple cropped area
• out of 4,775 acres agricultural land only 1,200 acres were under cultivation	• more than 25% of fallow land has now been brought under cultivation and 3,693 acres are presently being cultivated
• 57 villages with a population of 7,000 had little or no developmental activities	• 75 villages with a population of 7,901 have so far been brought under development
• there were 11 wells, 18 tanks and no jorebundhs (cross dams)	• there are now 123 wells, 122 tanks and 11 jorebundhs
• there were no trained personnel in agriculture, bee-keeping, health work, pisciculture, adult literacy, livestock, etc.	• there are now a total of 136 trained tribals:

agriculture	22
bee-keeping	26
health work	11
pisciculture	11
adult literacy	32
livestock	13
others	21

AJODHYA HILLS

"Ajodhya Pahar Adibasi Unnayan Sangha" (Ajodhya Hills Tribal Development Society) which was formed by the people of Ajodhya Hills in 1979 was registered and given official recognition by the Government in August 1980 under the Societies Registration Act.

The Society has Committees at the village level for 75 villages; there are eight zonal committees and the executive committee of the Society has sixteen members. The Working Body consists of a Joint Secretary, Cashier, President and Vice-President.

The first Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on December 21, 1980 when Mr. Gour Hansda, a zonal committee member from Hathinada in his speech stated:

> "Our united effort has started yielding good results which is evident from the report of the Secretary. If we all love our Association, if we take proper care of it, this newly born Sangha will one day become a full-fledged tree to give us fruits, flowers and shelter too."

Since the formation of the Society, all developmental activities are jointly planned and implemented by the LWS and the Society with the latter gradually assuming more and more responsibilities. The Ajodhya Hills programme while in its transition period is slowly transforming

Committed to Growth

the life of the tribals. They are stirring out of their apathetic condition, revelling in the joy of abounding growth evident in the colourful spectacle of fields and forests. Their little terracotta houses to which they return at dusk after a hard day's toil are awash with interesting exchange of news..... they must return the next morning to continue their labour and the building up of a dream, a sound, self-reliant and economically viable society.

It is envisaged that the Society, with a current membership of 300 would ultimately undertake the entire responsibility of development and welfare in Ajodhya Hills.

The initial thrust of the Society has been on mobilising the people to create a common fund. As of December 1980, they have been able to raise funds to the tune of Rs. 48,455. A major portion of this amount has come from voluntary contributions. For instance:

- those who were engaged in food for work schemes set aside one day's wages per week,
- extension workers and adult literacy teachers contributed a fair amount.

Profit from the sale of various commodities at the Consumer Store also helped to build up this common fund. Finally, in order to generate more funds as well as to strengthen the commitment of the people towards community growth, the Society passed a resolution in their meeting held on September 9, 1980 that there would be a subscription fee of Re. 1/- per month per member and a one time deposit of Rs. 10/- which would be refundable at the time of resignation or termination of membership. By this resolution the Society collected another Rs. 1,363/-. With a working capital of about Rs. 45,000/- the Society has presently undertaken:

- credit facilities to the people on easy terms,
- land cultivation,
- pisciculture,
- dharmagola (grain storage) etc.

76 families from about 25 villages received loans amounting to Rs. 5,770 from the Society for land cultivation. Another 75 families have been helped with Rs. 2,235/- for purchasing Ginga seeds. This programme has been taken up to boost the oil seed production in the hills. Credit has been given not only for agriculture and its allied activities but also for the purchase of text books, for medical treatment, house repairs, etc. Four families have recovered their mortgaged land by taking a loan of Rs. 1,300/- from the Society.

The Society has provided financial assistance to the people of Saharjuri

The Village Meeting

Soren, a tall, sinewy Santhal wiped the sweat off his brow. His golden brown body still glistened in the noonday sun while he dried himself. He was thirsty, yet not tired. His limbs ached pleasantly. The day's toil was over. A long walk through Saharjuri village, past the artistically patterned mud dwellings would take him to the rendezvous chosen beneath a large shady tree for today's Village Council meet. When he had cooled himself sufficiently he slipped into his shirt and chappals, took out a bidi and started smoking. He had many things to discuss—the Village Society had provided finance to open a new Consumer Store in his village. This was something the villagers felt they badly needed. The site of the Store would probably be close to his house as it was near the main forest road. He was very excited about the possibilities it offered. He could trade his surplus produce for items he needed for himself and his family. Till now they had to travel quite a distance to get the daily necessities from Ajodhya village. Some years back, it took almost a whole day to walk down to the plains to procure these things. Now he would be able to purchase tea, oil, umbrellas, combs, condiments and spices, sugar and salt, biscuits and chappals right at his doorstep! This was too good to be true!

He arrived at the rendezvous and was greeted by his friends who urged him to take a seat on the concrete circular platform built around the tree. He settled himself comfortably. Within a short time all the elders of the village and the Council members had come. Those who could not find a place on the platform settled on the ground. Most of them had laboured hard all day. Life was not all sweetness and light for the Santhals.

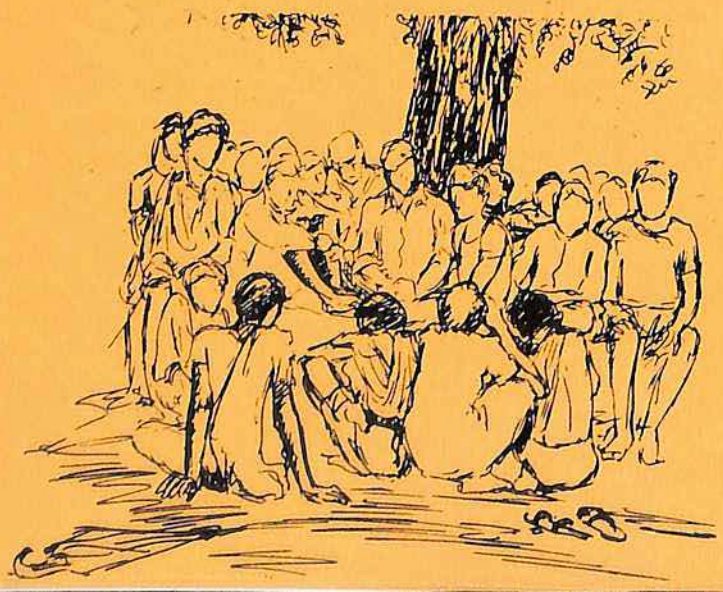
"Where do we find land to serve as a demonstration plot for our village" asked the old village leader. "Two workers who came from the Ajodhya Hills Agri-Complex were enquiring if anyone would like to donate land for this purpose."

"I don't mind if my land is used. There is a well nearby too. If it means all of us are going to benefit, well, I'm willing to offer my land" said Gasu, a young, energetic Santhal, who with his wife was only too eager to avail of the know-how being imparted at other villages near and around. There was a general murmer of satisfaction and appreciation. Gasu beamed with delight. He could already visualise his small plot sprouting a harvest of potatoes, cauliflower and onions.

Soren could hardly contain his patience any longer and asked, "There is news that we are going to have a new Consumer Store in our village. Is this true? Have they really agreed to our request?" A lot of exclamations followed and all eyes were turned to the village leader who slowly nodded his head and smiled, the wrinkles creasing at the corners of his eyes that were filling with tears. "Yes, it's true" he said. "At last we are going to have our own village store. We have to work hard to keep it going. Some of our young boys must come forward to run the store. This means they will have to learn how to keep an account of the stocks and the money. Oh, it is a great day for our village. We will rejoice. You have all seen so many new changes—changes are necessary, but we must keep our culture, our traditions alive, even while we develop into a stronger position economically. We must all work together to better our lives. Our children must learn well and take over our responsibilities someday—then we will survive without outside help. We will be free men."

The villagers cheered and applauded and felt their hearts expand with pride. They had come to hear such words of encouragement and hope. After many more matters of varying importance were discussed and decisions taken to recommend certain projects and improvements for the village to the Sangha, Soren treaded his way home in the gathering dusk with a happy heart. He shared a steaming hot meal with his family and spoke enthusiastically about the meeting.

There was a new expectancy in the air ... life was no longer a dreary burden but something they could learn to enjoy. It certainly felt good to be alive. Looking into the flames leaping around the earthen pot he could dream of a new and better tomorrow.



village for opening up a consumer store to provide the daily needs of the people. This has benefitted the inhabitants of another five villages in and around Saharjuri. It has also been decided that the Society should start purchasing oil seeds from the villagers at a reasonable price with a view to eliminate the middle man.

The Society has also taken up under its management better and maximum utilisation of land resources. Approximately 13 acres of land offered by the people has been brought under groundnut cultivation and a further 7 acres under boro cultivation. The purpose is to demonstrate the process of cultivation for better yield and to persuade more people to utilise their land more fully and fruitfully.

By undertaking a pisciculture programme the Society has virtually eliminated a local form of exploitation in this area. It was a common practice among the Machhuyas (a local fisherman community), to put fingerlings into ponds belonging to others, sometimes even without the knowledge of the pond owners. The Machhuyas furthermore secured by unfair means the largest share of the fish. But the people are no longer indifferent to their water sources, or easily deceived by the Machhuyas. The Society has introduced improved methods of pisciculture in Ajodhya and the people strive to get maximum yield from their ponds/bundhs etc. Pisciculture is regarded now as a profitable investment.

The irrigation facilities and inputs for improved agricultural produce have increased the value of land for the farmers who are trying to grow new crops like watermelons, etc. The acquisition of utility items like

bicycles, wrist watches, radios, transistors is a new feature among the hill people. It is found in recent statistics that a total of 64 bicycles, 47 wrist watches and 30 radio/ transistor sets were procured by the people of 26 villages. Interestingly, the village Ajodhya itself has acquired the greatest number of these items. Apart from developing a taste for utility goods an increasing awareness among the people has grown about the usefulness of the Society in the programme area.

22 adult education centres are run by locally trained persons. Besides literacy programmes, these centres also act as centres for the propagation of hygiene and health education, sanitation and other related domestic matters.

The community health programme at Ajodhya Hills has continued to place emphasis on Mother and Child Health care. Villages under intensive care are within walking distance from the hospital. Other villages are regularly visited by the health workers. Special clinics for under-fives are held twice a week along with antenatal clinic at the hospital. Maternal care either at the hospital or at home covers antenatal, postnatal and delivery cases. In these clinics mothers are taught about diet, nutrition, hygiene and baby care. They also receive prophylactic vaccination and immunization.

The existing cultural activities have been enriched by adding a few new inputs like sports and games in the programme area. The Society recently played in the finals of a football tournament with a team from the plains. It is reported that a large number of tribal spectators were present on the playground to cheer their team. Sports have thus contributed a new sense of affinity and regional solidarity among the tribal population.

WATER SUPPLY

Open Wells	–	19	
Tanks	–	5	
Cross Dams	–	4	
Command Area	–	381	acres
Families covered	–	190	

AGRICULTURE ASSISTANCE

Seeds	–	8,916	Kgs.
Seedlings	–	20,795	Nos.
Families covered	–	1,481	
Fertilizer	–	4,854	Kgs.
Area covered	–	140	acres
Families covered	–	634	

LIVESTOCK

Dairy	– 9	Villages Covered	Families Covered
Goatery	– 201	25	170
Poultry	– 55		

HOUSING

Number of families assisted	—	264	

EDUCATION

Schools	6	Students covered	240

ADULT LITERACY

Neoliterates		No. of centres	
Male 762	Female 40	Male 24	Female 2

TRAINING

Community Health Work	—	17
Agriculture extension	—	28
Lac Cultivation	—	2
Weaving	—	4
Apiculture	—	1
Fisheries	—	9
Others	—	1

Beyond Just Building A House

MURSHIDABAD & NADIA

The LWS programme in Murshidabad was initiated in 1975 as a flood emergency programme in the sub-division of Jangipur. It was followed with a housing rehabilitation and resettlement programme on land allotted by the Government to families who had lost their land by erosion. This programme was extended to the neighbouring district of Nadia in 1978.

Suitable infrastructure services were a natural follow-up of the housing resettlement programme and began to take effect in the latter half of 1977, since "housing" alone could not solve the package of problems that go beyond just building a house. People had to find food, employment, the satisfaction of their basic needs and requirements. Thus the drive for social development aimed at gradually raising the standard of living, basic education and health of the rural community. 1980 may be considered as the base year for integrated socio-economic development of the total area covering a target population of 20,000 in 47 colonies, of which 44 are in Murshidabad and 3 in Nadia.

The programme area is divided into five zones, each under a zonal supervisor. Each zone has committees with representatives from the colonies. At the field office of the programme a consultative committee with local PREM (Planning, Evaluation, Research and Monitoring) Cell members and colony/zonal representatives has been set up for overall planning and monitoring.

During 1980, 164 tubewells were sunk to serve a population of 14,760. The highlight of this project is the undertaking by the villagers and the local Government (Gram Panchayat) before sinking the tubewells that

- materials for the tubewells would be carried by the villagers to the sites,
- Panchayat concerned would maintain the tubewells, and
- the sites would be donated legally by the land owner for the use of the community.

In order to popularise sanitary habits, community centres of the colonies and the adjoining formal primary schools were provided with sanitary dug well (water seal type) latrines. In addition to this, four 'OXFAM' latrine units were set up in large colonies to serve a population of 1000 each.

A total primary level student strength of 2,079 were helped by providing ten buildings with brick walls and asbestos roofing: 78% of the student population belong to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Community.

Of the 88 adult literacy centres opened 40 are inside the colonies and 48 outside in the surrounding villages. During the year 856 students have been certified literate

DRINKING WATER

Tubewells	—	164
People covered	—	14,760

Participation

LWS — 80% Target Group 20%

ROAD CONSTRUCTION

Total number of roads	—	10
Total length	—	11,450 ft.
People covered	—	5,000
Colonies covered	—	10

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

Primary Schools	—	10
Total students strength	—	2,079
Villages/Colonies covered	—	79

Participation

LWS — 75% School Authorities — 25%

LIVESTOCK

		Coverage	
Goats	– 210		
Dairy	– 4	Villages/	People
Pigs	– 1	Colonies	
Poultry	– 20	16	194

ERICULTURE

Rearing Centres	—	7
Persons trained :		
reeling	—	6
rearing	—	15

SERICULTURE

Area covered (in acres)	—	2
Colonies covered	—	2
People trained	—	28

SELF-EMPLOYMENT-CUM-TRAINING

Centres in operation	—	2
Girls trained in Waste Loom	—	22
— Hobby Loom	—	6
Palm Fibre handicraft	—	16

ADULT LITERACY

Total centres	—	88
Number of students	—	5,146
Neo-literates	—	2,674

MEDICAL (INCLUDING COMMUNITY HEALTH WORK)

Clinics in operation	—	1
People covered	—	17,348

TRAINING

	Target Group	Staff
Entrepreneurship	–	3
Social Workers	2	2
Agriculture	2	1
Animal Husbandry	2	—
Grass Root Planning and Management	13	21
Total	19	27

SEEDS AND SEEDLINGS

	Colonies covered	People covered
Vegetables and Fruits	41	3,700

SELF-HELP SCHEME

			Participation		
Fishing nets Bidi rolling Petty business Hand Cart Cobbler shop Hand Weaving Horse and Horse Cart Rickshaw & Richshaw Van Bullocks & Bullock Cart	Colonies covered	Families covered	LWS	Bank	Govt.
	29	133	17%	50%	33%

—the total student strength being 1632 of which 901 were males and 731 female students.

The people availed of training in various skills and were able to set up cottage industries on obtaining low interest loans from the rural banks. With the aid of hobby looms and machines purchased, wall-hangings and side bags, etc., were produced from eri silk and cotton.

Ericulture has rapidly been adopted in the housing colonies. It is a kind of silk produced from worms which feed on wild castor plant leaves. The seeds of the castor plants are also utilised for producing industrial oil.

Apart from the twelve societies registered earlier, seven additional colony societies have been registered during 1980. Utilising the revolving funds of the colonies the registered societies as well as the non-registered committees assisted colony members such as fishermen, cobblers, rickshaw pullers, hand, bullock and horse cart owners, weavers and others in running their trades.

Approach roads to facilitate communications between the main roads and the colonies were paved with brick bats and cinder by the people themselves who prepared the bricks. This greatly aids the people to speedily transport their marketing produce or to reach the community health centres and clinics as and when needed.

Self-Sustained Support

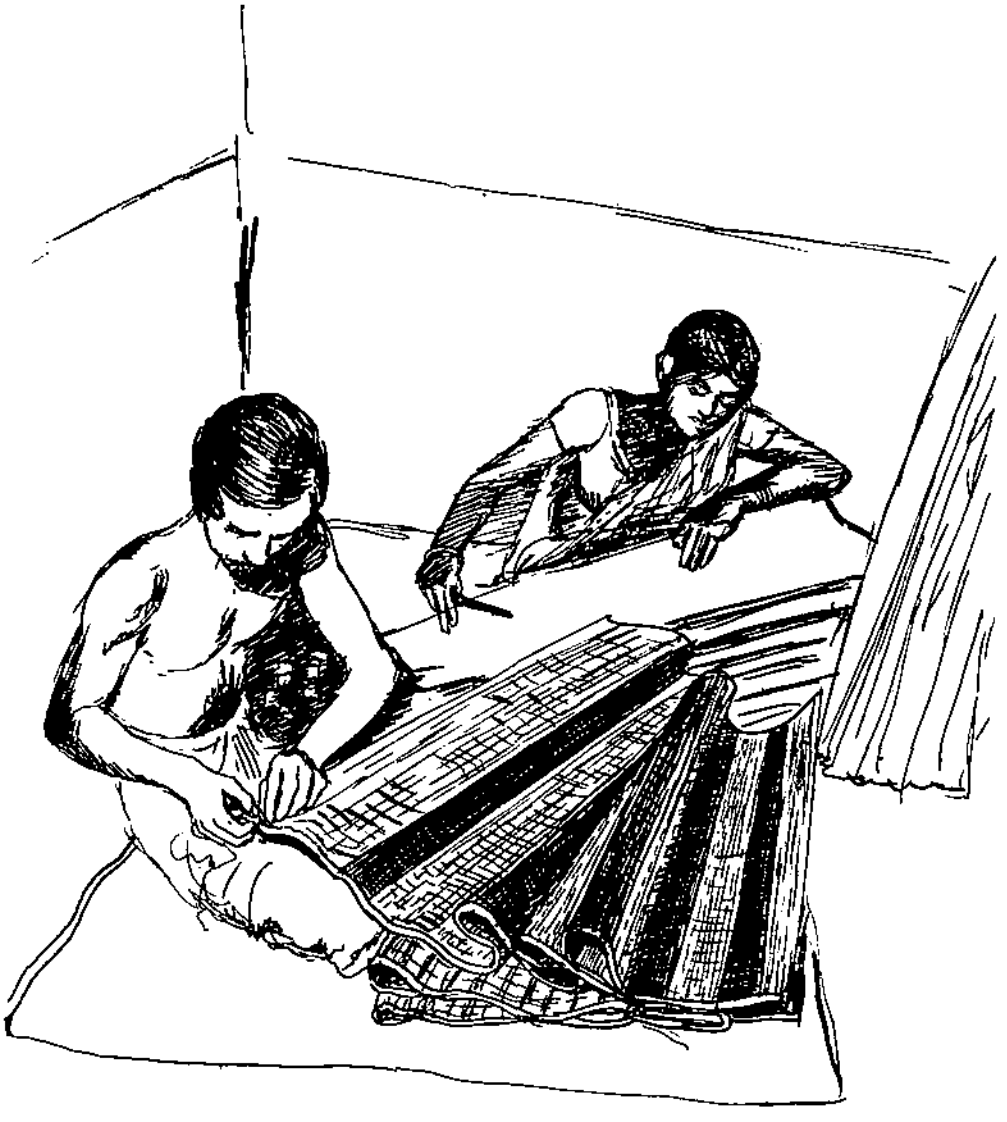
NORTH BENGAL

The Housing Resettlement Programme taken up for the 8000 homeless and landless people of North Bengal neared completion, as far as housing construction goes, at the beginning of 1980. However, the rehabilitation work still continued in efforts to develop the colonies socially and economically.

The main thrust of the programme during 1980 naturally lent itself to the development of skills, better utilisation of land resources, and institutional building in the formation of Societies and Cooperatives. The latter could take on the major responsibilities for promotion and generation of income feeding industries to raise the level of economic growth within the community, in a bid to attain a modicum of self-sustained support.

In an endeavour to work towards this direction, the following projects were taken up:

- Adult Literacy,
- Small Scale & Cottage Industries,
- Agricultural Extension Programme,
- Sericulture,
- Ericulture,
- Livestock,
- Medicinal Plants, and
- Self-Help Projects.



As a result, employment opportunities increased among the resettled colony members. Various Self-help Cottage Industries yielded promising results. The people demonstrated a keen desire to organise themselves into occupation based groups which they collectively manage.

- Thus 50 families jointly established the Khayerbari Weaving Centre at Jalpaiguri, which with the aid of 21 looms, provided their livelihood. The Weavers earned Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 per day. A Cooperative, which will eventually run the Weaving Centre, is expected to be registered soon.

- Similarly about 30 families earned a daily income of between Rs. 3 to Rs. 6 at the Sariam Centre.

- The Weaving Centre operated by the Tufanganj Nari Kalyan Samity benefits 14 people. This centre has sold goods worth nearly Rs. 13,000 and meets all its operational costs. It has nearly Rs. 4,000 in cash reserves.

- The Handloom Weaving Centre at Surangapur colony, West Dinajpur has been duly registered as a Society and employs 18 people who work on 6 looms. The Weavers' Committee administrates the weaving centre. The local Government is associated in the development of the Society and takes a keen interest in its progress.

- 20 trainees have undergone training in weaving at the weaving centre organised by RIDC (Refugee Industrial Development Corporation) Mekhliganj and have rapidly acquired skill in weaving. The finished goods of this centre are sold in the local markets.

A total number of 232 resettled families were able to cultivate 158 acres of land under Agriculture Extension Programme:

- 20 acres of cultivable land have been given to the "Chaklagark Samabaya, Sanjueta Krishi Samabaya Samity Ltd." which has been registered as an Agri-Cooperative Society by the 46 families who are mostly tribals resettled in the Bamanbari colony of West Dinajpur. The settlers have sought seed and financial assistance from the LWS in order to utilise the land well.

- Other colonies have also procured seeds to cultivate the land. Purba Kanthalbari colony produced 350 kgs. Kaun (a substitute for rice) benefitting 20 families and Nurpur colony of Jalpaiguri produced 2,400 kgs. of paddy benefitting about 40 families. The settlers bore the cost of fertilisers, irrigation and ploughing.

- A ringwell was constructed for the inhabitants of Nandajhar colony housing 126 families who were in dire need of water for irrigation. Approximately 8 acres of their land can now be cultivated.

- The majority of families resettled have utilised the 0.05 acres of land adjoining their houses for kitchen garden cultivation. After meeting their own fresh vegetable consumption needs some are able to sell the surplus and thereby enhance their earnings. Wheat has also been cultivated on 6 acres of land in Balahar colony benefitting 126 families. It reaped a fairly good harvest and from the sale proceeds the families intend to procure seeds for the next crop.

- 258 families have taken up animal husbandry by availing themselves of pigs, goats and poultry birds distributed by the LWS. The animals have been insured under a Cattle Insurance Scheme.

- 138 families have sought material assistance in the form of husking paddy implements which they use to produce and sell puffed and flattened rice, etc. Mostly women are engaged in this occupation which supplements the family earnings.

- Pisciculture too has been taken up at Dhanirhat colony in West Dinajpur where a large pond has been excavated. Fingerlings are being reared in this pond and should provide a source of earning to the people of this colony.

Numerous self help projects have been launched among the people of the colonies. Thus in West Dinajpur, a drug store, pan-bidi shop, tea stall, barbers shop, carpentry works were among the schemes started in the colonies. Similarly in Malda, bamboo handicrafts, groceries, bicycle repairs have been taken up by the people in the colonies. In Cooch Behar bidi makers, tailors, net makers, confectioners and rickshaw pullers were fortunate to receive help for their endeavours. In the same manner several people from Jalpaiguri sought assistance and have, with the help received, started profitable trades as blacksmiths, matmakers, sweetmeat sellers, craftsmen, hawkers, fruit sellers etc. Several families have been able to open Savings Bank accounts.

The LWS sericulture programme of North Bengal which commenced in 1976 has been steadily increasing in popularity. This programme has been taken up to improve the economic condition of the colony members as well as marginal and small farmers. It is a peculiar feature of North Bengal that land normally unsuitable for conventional crop cultivation has yielded a hundred fold to the growth of mulberry thus benefitting the target population. These farmers were unable to utilise their land earlier and faced great economic hardships. Sericulture has since been extended to all the five Districts of the region and the Government, encouraged by the response has opened new offices and nurseries and is expected to establish two filature centres with marketing facilities at Siliguri and Alipurduar. In certain areas, Banks and Government Sericulture Departments are assisting the people with loans and subsidies for building rearing houses for the Farmers Programme.

- 192 marginal farmers from Jalpaiguri and West Dinajpur sought assistance to start mulberry cultivation on their land which could later entitle them to subsidies from the Government and bank loans. These farmers were initially given mulberry cuttings and technical guidance and are today earning around Rs. 150 to Rs. 200 per crop in Jalpaiguri and around Rs. 450 per crop in West Dinajpur. They had subsequently been granted 50% Government subsidy and 25% bank loan totalling Rs. 3,500 per acre. The farmers at Jalpaiguri have formed a Society which has been registered under the Societies Act of the Government of West Bengal. Several farmers have improved their earnings by adopting sericulture as a profession.

- A new sericulture programme was taken up in Cooch Behar near Jamaldah on 2.66 acres of land and will benefit 15 families. More than half this area has been brought under mulberry cultiva-

tion. A sericulture demonstration centre on 3 acres of land was set up in village Panga Battala. This centre will enable 200 marginal farmers to learn the techniques of mulberry cultivation and the rearing of silk worms.

- Construction of two rearing houses was taken up and completed at Kamargachhi Primary School Sericulture Programme and Bhogrampuri Primary School Sericulture Programme. Construction of 18 rearing houses for 18 farmers at Tufanganj, Sariam, Madarihat and Jamaldah Centre was also completed.

- Five sericulture gardens have been handed over to the School authorities in Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri and West Dinajpur.

ERI CULTURE

Ericulture was a long abandoned occupation of the people of northern Jalpaiguri bordering the Himalayan foot-hills who were lured away to earning their living in the tea gardens. There has been a resurgence of interest among the settlers who have now been persuaded to revive ericulture by cultivating castor plants and rearing the eri-silk moth as a means of livelihood.

Eri seed production and rearing of eri-silk moth are being promoted at the Madarihat Ericulture Programme, Jalpaiguri, from where seeds are distributed and people trained in eri-culture.

- In West Dinajpur 3.5 acres of land have come under castor cultivation in the Bamanbari Housing Colony, housing 46 families.

- A demonstration centre for rearing eri-silkworms has been set up at Petkati Housing Colony in Jalpaiguri.

- This project will assist 75 families.

- A total cocoon production of 40 kgs. (green) has resulted from the combined efforts of the Demonstration Centre, Farmers' Programme at Madarihat and the Farmers' Programme, Islampur, West Dinajpur.

- The Chhakamari Weaving Samabay Samity is a small Cooperative Society of tribals in the village of Chhakamari, Jalpaiguri. This Cooperative is run by tribals producing eri-silk cloth. 30 tribal families employed by the Society have sought assistance from the LWS to strengthen their efforts and today have increased the production of eri-cloth considerably. The Cooperative aims at employing more tribal families as it expands.

MEDICINAL PLANT

A new medicinal plant project produces citronella java oil. Farmers are cultivating medicinal plants on 34 acres of land and oil is extracted from the distillation plant set up at Moynaguri. 51 kgs. of citronella java oil produced in 1980 fetched a price of Rs. 3,850/-.

Dhanirhat Colony

"Dhanirhat" means a place in which the rich people or traders carry out their daily business transactions. We do not know how the name was given to that particular area. There was nothing there except uncultivated fields when the Government allotted land to 40 refugee families who were working as landless labourers in that area. They had no shelter; they wore shredded rags and their meals if they could manage one a day, were frugal. These families were assisted with houses. Some of the people were semi-skilled and could make bamboo baskets, however, they had no money to purchase bamboos to manufacture these baskets. A few women of the colony could pound rice with the aid of hand-operated husking machines.

When the people came forward to request assistance to develop their trades, the LWS provided training to the semi-skilled workers as it was found that they could use their skills to produce bamboo handicrafts which had a ready market. Within a year all the families started work on bamboo crafts, matting, basket making etc. and traded these items for husking paddy. Whenever there was no work in the fields, men and women utilised their skills to supplement their income. They earned Rupees six to eight per day. They purchased goats, and chickens which they reared in the colony. Their kitchen gardens too thrived. The potato crop reached an all high level of 30 kgs. per household. Kanai, a young boy of the community who was trained in adult literacy and community development work looked after the whole colony providing guidance in matters of health, poultry, goatery rearing and kitchen gardening.

The change has been remarkable... Today the people wear decent clothing, and a brighter and healthier look. Their gardens and supplementary trades are productive. They no longer ask for doles but seek guidance to improve their existing conditions. It is encouraging to see how by dint of hard work, initiative and perseverance they have demonstrated that it is possible to bring about self-sustained growth.

WATER SUPPLY

Tubewells	—	88
Open wells	—	8

AGRICULTURE EXTENSION PROGRAMME

Families covered	—	232
Acreage covered	—	158

ERICULTURE

No. of families covered	—	287

HOUSING

No. of families assisted	—	186

LIVESTOCK

Pigs	—	67
Goats	—	250
Poultry birds	—	279
Families covered	—	258
Villages covered	—	20

SELF-HELP

Drug Store	Black smith
Barber	Carpenter
Fishing nets	Tea shops
Bidi making	Cycle repairs
Confectioneries	Grocery shop
Carpet making	Rickshaw
Artisans	Rice husking

Villages/colonies covered 20 Familes covered 283

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Schools – 12 Students Strength – 3,596

ADULT LITERACY

Number of centres	—	3
Number of students	—	272
Neo-literates	—	200

BURDWAN & BIRBHUM

Integrating Social Services

JANGAL MAHAL

The Jangal Mahal area of Burdwan District consists of dense forests inhabited by tribals who are poor, backward and untouched by modern civilisation. The programme of LWS caters in this region to a population of 6,287 in 42 villages. For effective programme implementation the area is divided into six sections with each section having its own sub-centres. The villagers on the other hand have founded their own Committees at the village level, and in each Committee the Panchayat Member (elected member of the local government) of the area has also been coopted. The programmes are planned and implemented jointly by the village Committees and the LWS.

During 1980 local people who were trained in various fields of development were absorbed within the LWS set up, replacing external personnel. People continued to work for the development of the whole community, having been conscientized particularly by attending training courses outside the programme area, which were in themselves eye-openers to the tribals, of the world around them and of which they are intrinsically a part. An important aspect of the 1980 programme was the integrating of social services so that overall growth in all spheres could take shape. The result of various development activities was the emergence of an apex body.

A recent survey of the programme area indicates that:

- 49.43 percent of the target population are landless
- 35.44 percent are having land upto 1 acre
- 9.62 percent own land upto 2.5 acres
- 4.30 percent own between 2.5—5 acres, and the remaining
- 1.21 percent above 5 acres.

This means that over 85 percent of the total population are either landless or sub-marginal farmers. The survey further indicates that only 12.35 percent of land are irrigated and barring only 0.12 percent of the population who earn their income from small-scale industries, the entire population depend on agriculture and day-labour. The average family size in this area is also slightly more than six per family which is higher than the normal family size of rural families. The literacy rate among males is 24.78 percent and 2.36 percent among females. From the foregoing information it can be seen that any development aimed at raising the standard of living and providing a better life for the people would require the combative forces of education and economics to play a vital role throughout the growth process.

Progress

Demonstration farms were set up in all six sectors, enabling the traditional farmers to become aware of the benefits of modern agricultural practices.

Since commencement of the programme in Jangal Mahal the overall percentage of literacy rate has increased to 58.89 percent. During 1980 about 170 acres of agricultural land were brought under improved methods of cultivation by providing high yielding variety seeds. However, the total area cultivated during the year was 926 acres. Irrigation facilities were provided for about 650 acres with the provision of 15 wells and 8 tanks by the LWS and another 6 wells by others. As a means of introducing appropriate technology, some of the ring wells were fitted with Persian wheels to be operated either by animal or man-power. The Bheladanga centre has set up a cooperative grain store to provide improved variety of seeds for local cultivators. In order to raise the nutritional standard of the villagers, the centre has encouraged the villagers to have kitchen gardens and for this purpose, vegetable seedlings are raised at the demonstration-cum-seed farms.

In collaboration with the Sericulture Department of the Government of West Bengal, sericulture was introduced in this region and 3 acres were brought under mulberry cultivation. The introduction of sericulture will gradually increase the employment opportunities, especially during off-season.

During the year under review 6 tanks were brought under pisciculture. Two vested tanks under Bheladanga sub-centre which were previously used by 3 families were taken over by the Village Committee for this purpose. The Committee also decided to utilise the profit accruing from this to build up a community fund. During the year they earned a net profit of Rs. 800/- from these tanks. They have further invested another Rs. 400/- for fish cultivation. The Committee also assisted 20 families with loans to purchase fertiliser. Similarly, the Village Committees which fall under Dumra and Chhora sub-centres have started fish cultivation.

For complementary and supplementary income, small-scale and cottage industries such as bee-keeping, weaving, tailoring, hobby loom, sewing, basket making, etc., are being encouraged throughout the programme area. The LWS is

supporting four sewing centres in addition to two weaving and two hobby loom centres in order to train local men and women in the appropriate skills. So far 359 villagers have been trained in sewing, weaving and hobby loom and another 40 are under training.

Young people of this area have set up youth centres at various places and thus have realised the importance of taking active part in the development of the whole community. For instance, in Amjuruli the youth centre members have ensured that the people do not go to the money-lenders for loans since they have to pay a very high rate of interest. Instead they are building up a fund of their own from which loans are given to the people at a nominal rate of interest. The young people are trying to build up the account by undertaking various kinds of work, e.g. during the year they acted as security guards for the standing paddy crops and for this service they received 2,500 kgs. of paddy. In another village under Chuwa sub-centre the youth club has excavated a drinking water well with their own labour. In Hariphela village, a youth club has introduced a group savings scheme whereby each member has to contribute to the savings fund on a monthly basis. By this process they have collected Rs. 1,000. The amount thus saved will be used for advancing loans to needy members to meet their emergency and subsistent needs, thus reducing their dependence on money-lenders and landlords. These centres intend to utilise some of their resources for expanding group activities in their villages.

Not only the youth centres but also several village committees have realised the need for building up their own capital and have, therefore, initiated a process of establishing a revolving fund.

The medical unit situated at Bheladanga is extending community health services to three sub-centres out of the six. In order to ensure health education a course was conducted on community health programme at Bheladanga. Participants from other centres also attended. Besides this, women workers were enlisted to spread preventive measures of health among the villagers.

The growth centres of this nature provide a place of deeper contact with the village people, their life and problems. Thus they are able to stimulate a sense of responsibility among the villagers.

ORGRAM

The integrated area development programme taken up five years ago in Bhatar Block of Orgram in Burdwan District drew to a close with the completion of formalities for officially handing over the Orgram Complex to the Social Welfare Department of the State Government. The handing over ceremony will take place on 14th February, 1981. The Government has assured the continuance of the on-going development activities in this region.

TRAINING

	Number of Persons
Agriculture	3
Dairy Management	1
Health Work	10
Bee-Keeping	236
Social Workers	15
Sewing	92
Weaving	34
Hobby Loom	8
Others	2
	381

BIRBHUM (SELF-HELP)

	Colonies covered	Families covered
Rickshaw Pullers		
Bidi Makers		
Shop Keepers		
Bamboo basket makers	3	49
Goatery		
Dairy		

Participation: L.W.S. 75% Bank 25%

HOUSING

No. of families assisted	125

AGRICULTURE

Total agricultural land	926 acres
Under cultivation	652 „
Distribution:	
Paddy seeds	3,843 kgs.
Wheat	878.5 kgs.
Mustard	64.55 kgs.
Potato seeds	1,872 kgs.
Vegetable seedlings	71,340 nos.
Tanks covered under Pisciculture	6

EDUCATION

	Collaboration	
	L.W.S.	Others
Primary School	1	
Adult Literacy Centres	16	5
Total Students	1,031	
Neo-literates	632	

WATER SUPPLY

	Collaboration	
	L.W.S.	Others
Wells	15	6
Tanks	8	—
Tubewells	14	1

BIRBHUM

The adjacent district of Birbhum was also included under the Housing Resettlement programme at the request of the State Government in 1979. The LWS, therefore, assisted 761 homeless and landless families to construct houses. During 1980, in collaboration with the rural bank, rickshaw-pullers, bidi-makers, batik-printers, shopkeepers, basket-makers and those taking up animal husbandry and dairy farming were assisted to carry on their traditional occupations.

CALCUTTA & SUNDARBANS

Pavement Dwellers Programme

CALCUTTA

The pavement and embankment dwellers of Calcutta have these many years been almost totally neglected. Yet in spite of the callous indifference they often encounter, many have displayed a remarkable will to survive by keeping their spirits up, the search on, for food, for kindness and love, even when they have been spurned aside or denied a piece of bread or a coin. They have surreptitiously occupied the streets and in their own rights, inherited the city.

This inheritance has been enriched in recent years by the attention being given to the children of pavement dwellers. It was found that no programme for the pavement dwellers could be meaningful without due regard for the children. It is true that 80,000 children have their 'homes' on the pavements of Calcutta, curling up at nights on the cold and dusty streets under the open sky or beneath a shed, a porch, a rag hitched tent or a tree. These children grow up in an atmosphere charged with poverty and neglect. The early formative years of their life are spent playing on the streets, ill-clad and poorly fed. They normally have little or no access to schools which could improve their aptitude or mental abilities. Poverty looms as a barrier between them and a hostile world.

Spatially, the pavement dwellers' programme consists of the following:

- Pavement Schools,

- Entally Centre,
- Ultadanga Centre,
  Salt Lake (and Sundarbans).

In terms of sectoral programmes, the following components are found:

- Non-formal education to the children of pavement dwellers,
- Formal training of boys and girls in Entally and Ultadanga centres,
- Vocational training in Entally and Ultadanga centres as well as in Garcha,
- Night shelter programme in Ultadanga centre,
- Housing and resettlement programme at Salt Lake,
- Community Health programme,
- Self-employment centres at Entally and Ultadanga centres,
- Drinking water programme in and around Calcutta.

Though the primary focus of the LWS Calcutta Programme is to resettle the pavement dwellers outside Calcutta and in the Sundarbans on land given by the Government, special emphasis has been laid on equipping the children of pavement dwellers with basic education, both formal and non-formal, vocational training and proper medical care. Thus schools were opened right on the pavements of Calcutta and run jointly with the Janashiksha Prochar Kendra. Small children thus had the chance to receive non-formal education as a first step towards more formal and vocational education. They gathered under the shade of a tree, a shed, porch of a dilapidated building or an open park for their classes, depending on the weather. They were taught to read and write, simple arithmetic and the importance of personal cleanliness, hygiene, arts and crafts. The classes were held in the afternoons between one and four. The brighter ones were taken into the LWS Primary Schools at Entally and Ultadanga and from there the meritorious students were strongly recommended by the LWS for admission into cost-free Government schools.

The pavement schools started functioning in 1976 initially with five schools. At present there are 26 schools having a total number of 1,273 students. The average attendance is 60% per day. A total of 2,500 students have attained elementary education as of December 1980. Most of these children have been absorbed into the Vocational Training wings of the Entally and Ultadanga Centres and into the Primary Schools which hold classes from Infants to Standard IV.

The selection of students for the Primary Schools has been made from the pavement schools, various pavement concentrations and the slums. 250 students at Entally and 400 at Ultadanga of both sexes between the age group of 6 to 11 years were taught the alphabet in English, Bengali and Hindi and elementary arithmetic, social sciences, etc. They also underwent physical training exercise in addition to singing, nursery rhymes, etc. Annual sports and cultural functions were held during the year and the children were taken on educative tours. After completion of school education, the boys and girls were selected for vocational training depending on their aptitude. Thus 70 girls and 30 boys were absorbed into vocational training units of the Entally and Ultadanga Complexes, respectively.

Out of the 150 seats allocated for VTC at the Entally Complex 140 students were trained in 1980 and similarly out of 50 seats available at Ultadanga, 50 students received training during 1980. The Garcha VTC has 50 seats, and up to 1980, 150 students received training.

Crafts such as weaving, tailoring,

batik, tie and dye, and embroidery were taught at the Entally Complex and carpentry, weaving, block-printing to boys at Ultadanga.

The training centre at Entally has been essentially devised for girls and the training centre at Ultadanga for boys only. These training centres are being administrated by the LWS. Garcha VTC though financed by the LWS is administrated by an organisation called 'Karma Kutir'. The training course covers a period of one year from January to December. The trained boys and girls were either absorbed into the employment centres at Karma Kutir or the Self-employment centres at Entally and Ultadanga.

The Vocational Training Centre at Garcha, Ballygunge, has a Primary Education programme with courses on home science, hygiene, family welfare, music and literacy and a vocational training programme, with courses on tie and dye, needlework and tailoring. Out of the 50 seats for girls there have been 35 reserved for vocational training and 15 for primary education. After completing the training the students were absorbed into the Production Centre at Ballygunge. Here they are in the process of undergoing training for 1½ years in batik, tie and dye, block-printing, doll, bag and toy making. 41 unemployed women are under training in this centre. Their average income per month varied between Rs. 200 and Rs. 300 per worker from the sale of these products. This Institute works in collaboration with the State Government and the All India Handicrafts Board. The cost of training, including stipend payment of Rs. 30/- per month, per trainee, was borne by the State Government. A new training-cum-sales counter was opened at Gariahat on 17th March, 1980. 35 girls were admitted to this centre during 1980 though it has a capacity for 100 seats.

To meet the pressing needs of the slum and pavement dwellers, extension services have been taken up in Motijheel slum area and in Dakshindari and Khudirampalli areas adjoining the Entally and Ultadanga Complexes, respectively. The Bank of Baroda has advanced approximately Rs. 600,000/- to the artisans and traders of Ultadanga extension area and Rs. 30,000 to those of Entally slum areas at an interest rate of 5% only on easy repayment terms. This has helped weavers, tailors, grocers, potters and other tradesmen to set up home and cottage industries. The infrastructures provided by the LWS, such as schools, community services, and tubewells, in these areas have prompted the Bank of Baroda to select these areas for financial investment and development.

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Primary Schools			Pavement Schools		
Schools at the centres	—	2	Schools in operation	—	26
Classes held—Infant to Class IV			Roll Strength	—	1,400
Students taught up to 1980	—	800	Neo-literates	—	1,000

It Pays to be Honest

Eight year old Ashoke Pramanik is a student of Class II-A at the Ultadanga Complex Primary School. He lives by the side of the Complex with his mother Kalidasi and sister Angali.

On 8th October, 1980 he found a two-rupee note in the Complex compound and handed it over to his headmaster. When this was brought to the attention of the local school management, the money was handed back to Ashoke with a bonus of Rs. 4/-, there being no other claimants for the money.

With this unexpected earning, Ashoke helped his mother to sell firewood in the evening local market. His honesty, coupled with prudent use of the money enabled him to earn Rs. 115/- in three months. This amount includes the profit made plus the few rupees donated to him by visitors. He has certainly learnt that it 'pays' to be honest!

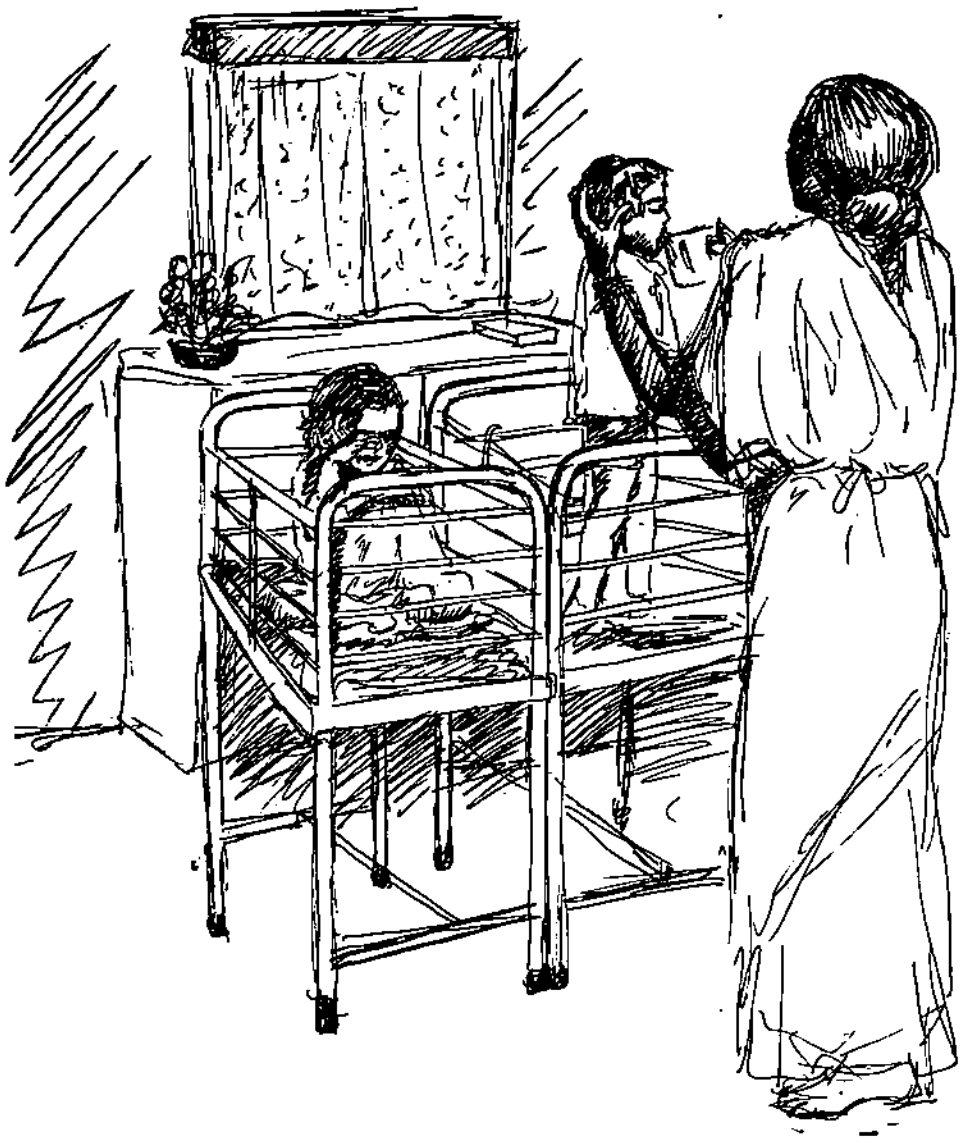
Repaying with Gratitude

On a hot sultry afternoon in June, Srimati Mamata Debnath gathered together 200 women from the Khudirampalli slum and led them to the nearby LWS Ultadanga Complex. The stir caused by them naturally brought the Office Manager and his staff rushing outside to investigate the cause of the confusion. Srimati Debnath boldly stepped forward and said, "Sir, we come to you because we want to get Bank loans. We want to try and earn more money to help our families and we know we can do so only if we get loans from the Bank to buy sewing machines." They were encouraged by the prospect such loans had offered to the inhabitants of Dakindhari slum. They themselves lived in shackles on the banks of the huge pond of Khudirampalli adjoining the Complex under conditions that left a lot to be desired. These unfortunate refugees were land encroachers which made it even more difficult for them to procure Bank loans. Yet the Manager could not turn away from an appeal which came from people who desired to help themselves. "It is a chance we must take, but we will try. Are you ready to form an Association?" he questioned. The cry was a resounding, "Yes".

And so the Mahila Samity was established with Srimati Debnath becoming the Founder Secretary. The Bank of Baroda advanced a loan totally amounting to Rs. 44,000/- to 48 families to purchase sewing machines on easy repayment terms. This has increased the community earnings considerably, enabling the children of the community to get their first lessons in sewing as well.

As Srimati Debnath recalls, "I had hired a machine years ago after I was confident I could sew, but what I earned was negligible. It was so fortunate that I came in contact with your Social Workers who have guided us in forming our Association. With the loans we are now able to get from the Bank to purchase these machines our incomes have trebled and we are able to repay the loans quite easily."

Srimati Debnath also takes keen interest in community health work, trying to draw more and more local people to participate in working for the benefit of the community.



Community Health Services have been extended to these areas and include immunisation, mother and child health care, health education, motivation on family planning etc.

Clinical Doctors and their Assistants have run a creche and clinic at Entally and a clinic at Ultadanga. In addition, the two general clinics and the eye clinic at Garia, have been functioning along with the general clinic at the Resettlement Colony at Salt Lake. These clinics have been and are serving the pavement and slum dwelling population of these areas. There has however, been a marked shift of emphasis from curative to preventive treatment.

An important development in the Garia Eye care programme has been the registration of the clinic as the 'Vision Welfare Society' under the Societies Registration Act, with effect from 1st January 1980. This Society is now eligible for local grants and contributions and as the latter increase, the LWS support will be reduced and eventually cease. During the year 19,770 patients were given treatment which included eye examinations, cataract and other eye operations, preventive care with the aid of posters, speeches, leaflets and the distribution of Vitamin 'A' to children to prevent night blindness. The Society purchased land adjoining the clinic for the purpose of building a small eye hospital. This is the only free eye clinic in the District of south 24 Parganas.

ENTALLY & ULTADANGA

Weaving Tailoring Batik Work Needle Work Carpentry Block Printing Eri-rearing	Vocational Courses Persons trained – 190

NIGHT SHELTER

People covered	— 29,398
(Average attendance per day—89)	

BANK LOANS

Entally extension area	– Rs. 30,000
Ultadanga extension area	Rs. 600,000
People covered	– 15,000

SALE PROCEEDS

Entally	– Rs. 200,000
Ultadanga	– Rs. 220,000

SALT LAKE RESETTLEMENT

The newly cut seven furlong stretch of land strip, a fringe area of Salt Lake City, was gradually encroached upon by about 1,500 refugee families numbering approximately 10,000 people from Bangladesh or erstwhile East Pakistan. They sought shelter in make-shift shacks and tents on the canal embankment slowly changing the area into a slum.

The Salt Lake area was previously a marshy swamp and a part of uninhabited Sundarbans. Approximately 10,000 acres of land have been reclaimed by the Government and a satellite township has grown up in the area. Another 5,000 acres still remain under sweet water and forms a large lake abounding in fish. The Government requested the LWS to resettle the squatters in Sector IV which lies to the north west.

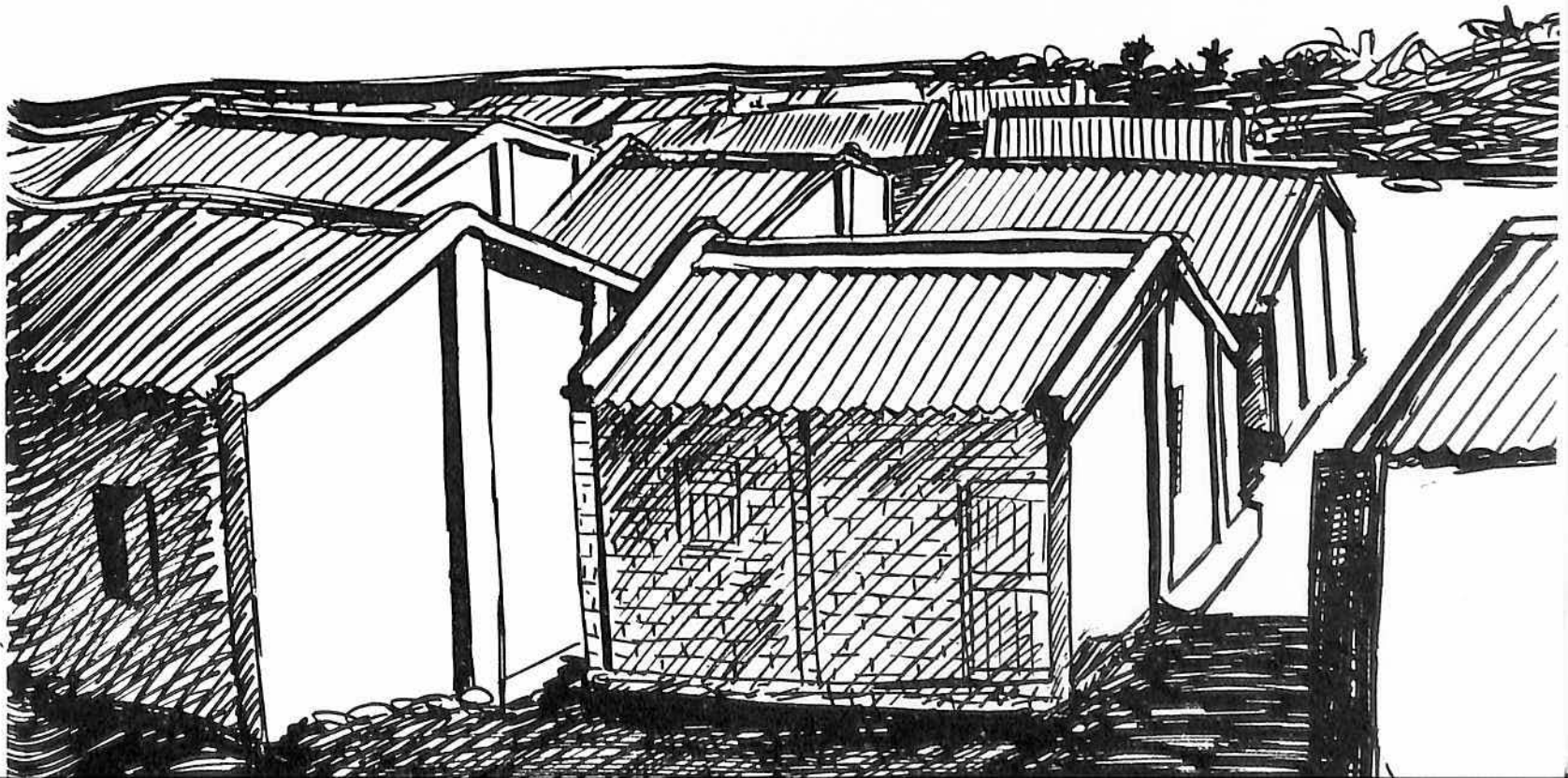
The construction of the Colony was taken up in July 1978 and by the end of December 1980, 650 houses were completed. They are single unit brick houses, measuring 100 sq. metres with a floor area of 29 sq. metres, open frontage of 45 sq. metres and a back space of 26 sq. metres.

The State Government to whom the houses were handed over selected 350 families from among the canal embankment dwellers for shifting to the new site. The houses have been given to each family on permanent lease-hold right. They have to pay a nominal consideration money to the Government on easy instalments, the rate of which has not been fixed so far. For every four houses there is one source of potable water from a tubewell sunk to a depth of 250 ft. and every home has a water seat toilet. The State Government has constructed link roads, drains, sewerage, septic tanks, a shopping centre, primary school, a community centre etc. at a cost of approximately 8 to 9 million rupees including the cost of the land. When all the families are settled, an apex Body will be formed and though no repayment will be made to the LWS, a nominal rent will be fixed as house-rent which will create a revolving fund for the development of the Colony and to take care of the upkeep of the houses, repairs and maintenance of tubewells and other community development activities.

A free clinic has been set up and with the delivery of Community Health Services made available to the people, a better health level should be ensured in due course. 30 girls are undergoing training in tailoring at the Tailoring Centre. The refugee fishermen families have taken steps to form a Cooperative Society in order to procure fishing lease-hold rights at the Lake which the Government has planned to give to such settlers.

Efforts are being made to establish a Kindergarten School and a Vocational Training Centre to enable children and adults to obtain educative and occupational skills.

Houses completed with septic tanks and tubewells (1979)	—	434
Houses completed with septic tanks and tubewells (1980)	—	66
Total houses completed with septic tanks and tubewells	—	500
Pavement dwelling families rehoused	—	359



SUNDARBANS

The 45 families inhabiting the straw thatched mud houses in Binodpur, that run in two rows alongside a vast silver sheeted water reservoir measuring 600′ X 50′, came from the pavements and canal embankments of the city of Calcutta in several batches.

Another 126 families have been surveyed jointly by the LWS and the Vagrancy Department of the Government of West Bengal for inclusion in the resettlement at Sundarbans of which 47 families will be shifted in January 1981. 175 houses are now under construction.

The Sundarbans is the southern seaward fringe of West Bengal, characterised by numerous islands and interlacing channels by which the Ganges and the Brahmaputra rivers flow into the Bay of Bengal. It has a total area of 4,400 sq. miles and is a part of 24-Parganas District, through which flow the Hooghly and other less important rivers.

Upstream water is sweet but brackish in the lower reaches of the Sundarbans. Salinity of water varies from river to river. Special types of fish like Hilsa and Bhetki flourish in the brackish water. Fishing is normally carried out in the months of November to February when nearly 85 per cent of the total annual catch of 3,000 metric tonnes of fish are netted.

The islands are covered with forests of which 1800 sq. miles have been reclaimed for cultivation. The population is sparse. Besides sweet water and brackish water fish, Sundarbans has the vast potential of Deep Sea Fishing. Fishing or pisciculture is thus envisaged as a major source of livelihood of the re-settlers. Fingerlings of Mrigal, Silver Carp, Katla, Ruhi have been introduced in the reservoirs and are thriving. The 45 families are working jointly on fishing schemes.

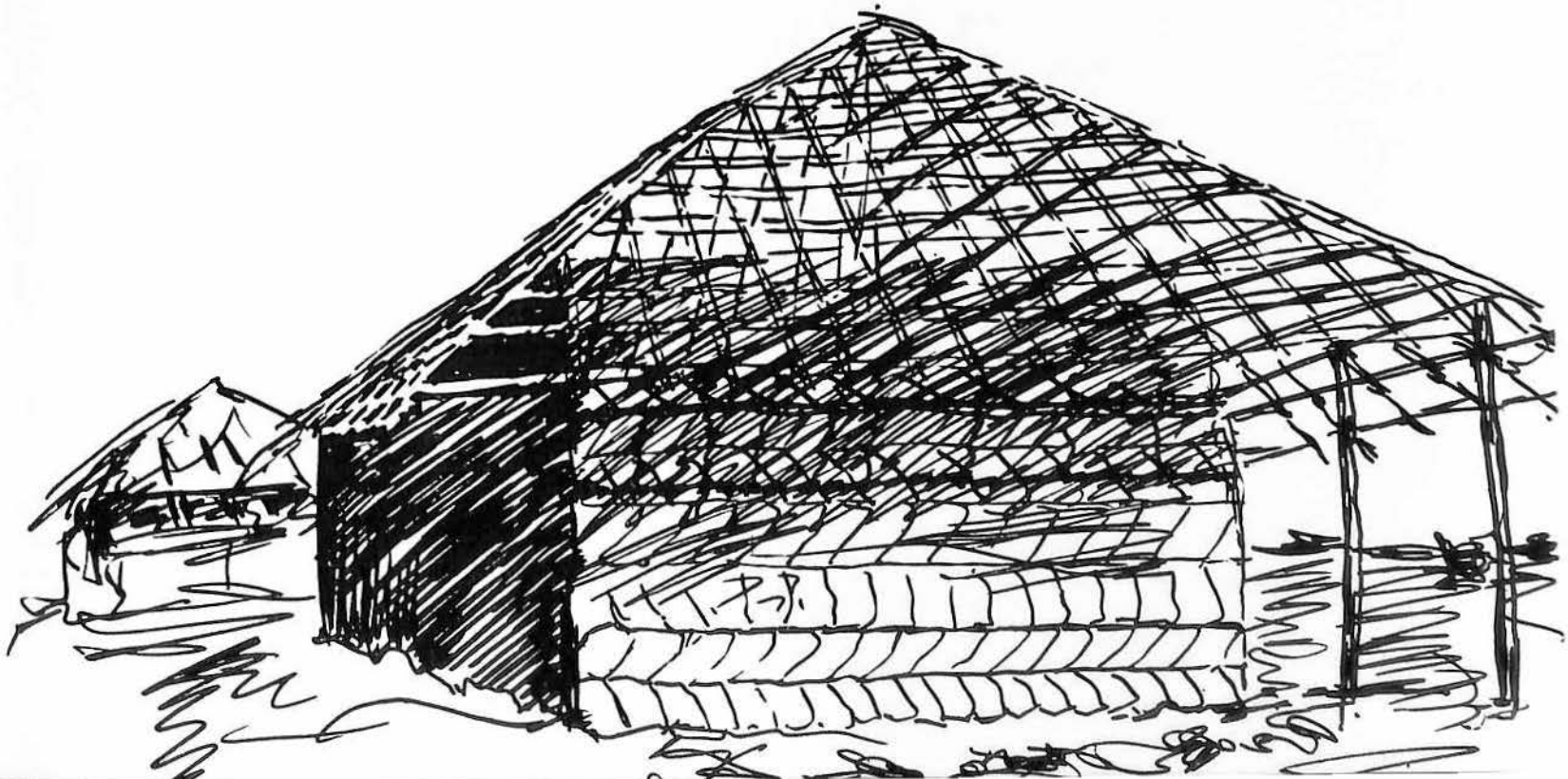
A canal running between the irrigation embankment and Binodpur has been blocked by pile driving to prevent erosion and flooding by the river Thakuran. It forms an artificial reservoir which on the left side of the middle embankment is used for agriculture as well as aquaculture.

In addition to these reservoirs, two fisheries for saline and fresh water fish are under construction in front of the houses, and would facilitate pisciculture and land irrigation.

8 members of the resettled colony and 4 local villagers have taken up a joint fishing scheme after provision of gill and hilsa nets, floats, sinkers and markers. This joint fishing effort enables the resettlers to identify with the local community. 12 such units are being formed comprising of selected colony members and local villagers who by the aid of fishing equipment provided will be able to earn a good income. The local villagers have agreed to provide their own boats and the catch will be shared equally.

The local Anchal Sabhapati and Pradhan have evinced interest in this scheme and are selecting the best fishermen from among the villagers to participate.

The Central Institute of Fisheries Technology has agreed to train the settlers in canning and processing of various types of fish, prawns, clams and frogs' legs. Fishing is a lucrative industry, especially in view of the spiralling prices and tremendous demand. With financial assistance from the District Fisheries to which the settlers will



be entitled once their Cooperative is formed and registered, dependence on outside aid will gradually diminish.

The region is lashed by cyclonic gales and storms, especially during the monsoon and post monsoon period. Tidal waves also present a formidable danger, particularly in mid-September when the high tide of the River Thakuran is at its maximum. The embankment of 3.15 kms. which was constructed withstood this tide in 1980. 'Beldars' or guards kept vigilence over this embankment during the three months of August, September and October. Since the protection of this embankment is of vital importance for the safety of the Binodpur resettlement and the surrounding villages, a sluice gate has been constructed which protects the land from flooding.

The possibilities of constructing "earth platforms" or shelters for the people and cattle, in the event of flash floods and cyclones, are being explored in consultation with the Gram Panchayats and the BDO. These earth platforms would make the villages cyclone-proof in the sense that all villagers would have access to safe platforms within minutes from their homes. This would serve a dual purpose as the pit formed could be used for pisciculture or irrigation.

A weaving and sewing centre has also been established. Bee-keeping as a subsidiary occupation has been initiated and also extended to villages in the neighbourhood.

A kindergarten school is run by an Extension Worker for 29 children between the ages of 5 to 12. Three teachers from among the pavement embankment dwellers have been trained and are conducting classes in Adult Literacy.

Frequent soil testing is continued to ascertain the soil salinity levels. Although salinity is lesser than what it was last year the soil is still declared unfit for any cultivation by the Central Soil Salinity Research Institute, Research Station Canning, District 24-Parganas, West Bengal. It has therefore so far been impossible to succeed in growing anything. Paddy was cultivated on an experimental basis but it did not survive. Similarly out of 400 banana seedlings planted approximately 100 survived. Kitchen gardening has also not been successful. However, it is expected that after next year's rainy season the soil condition will be improved so much that some results will develop. The embankment constructed prevents intrusion of saline water. The land has been ploughed and the soil turned over and exposed to the sun in readiness for fresh cultivation.

HOUSING

Houses built	—	128
Families rehoused	—	45

WATER SUPPLY

Tubewells	—	8

LIVESTOCK

Pigs distributed	Families covered	Colonies covered
63	45	1

ADULT LITERACY

Centres	—	3
Neo-literates	—	14

RANCHI & SANTHAL PARGANAS

Gathering the Harvest

In the joint partnership of pursuing socio-economic development in Ranchi District, the sustained, permanent and major workers are the local people. The LWS has only given supportive assistance whether materially, financially or through technical guidance and training in fields where the people themselves have sought help for schemes which could facilitate development.

In each of the four demonstration farms, situated at ASMA, Sarnatoli, Pakna, Jate and Buru Baratpur, six village farmers were given training by the LWS Agricultural Officer in improved agricultural methods. Farmers eager to develop their land offered an acre in each village to serve as a demonstration plot, to the farmers who had received training and would in turn impart 'know-how' to them. Thus mono-crop areas were brought under multiple-crop cultivation by dry land farming and maximum utilisation of marshy, fallow and uneven terrain. Improved varieties of seeds were sown, fertilizers applied and pesticides sprayed to ensure better yield. Thus several villages reaped a fairly good harvest despite the summer drought.

Sardikel is an example of growing community development. This village was the home of dissension and group rivalries. But the farmers soon realised that by joint farming efforts they could produce much more than before. Thus they laboured together on 18 acres of fallow land, tilling, ploughing, sowing and gathering the harvest, which they joyfully shared. Pandu and Buru Baratpur villages are other examples of the mushrooming of community frontiers geared to meet the challenges of future development, unitedly.

These farmers have been aided in their task by the commissioning of the irrigation systems in mid-October, without which it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to cultivate winter crops such as wheat.

Through the Village Societies and Village Committees, seeds, pesticides and fertilizers were distributed in the villages. A portion of the produce was returned to the Village Societies for redistribution. 27 Village Societies are grouped under the Horo Cultural Society, a Body registered with the Government, for perpetuating the culture and traditions of the tribals.

The highlight of animal husbandry has been the increase of the goat population despite rather heavy mortality rates. The offspring distributed in the community, have been increasing and multiplying satisfactorily. In sharp contrast to this has been the dairy programme. Owing to drought conditions fodder became scarce. Many cows became prematurely dry. The people were thus unable to repay their loans and approached the banks who kindly agreed to their request for time extension to repay the loans. The Government too relaxed tax collections as well as loan refunds in view of the situation. Towards the end of the year the second milking season started with the increase in fodder cultivation in most of the villages.

For the first time in the history of Jate village in Ranchi District a new lac factory was opened. This fits in with the projects of the Industries Department of the District of Ranchi for helping villages to have their own "Seed Lac Mini-Units". This unit converts stick lac into seed lac for sale to larger lac factories or to the State Trading Corporation. Lac cultivation is mainly confined to tribal areas. Lac is essentially an export commodity since as much as 80% of the total produce is exported. This constitutes about 50 per cent of the world lac trade. In India as much as 65% of the total produce is available from the Chhotanagpur region of Bihar alone.

The tribals have evinced keen interest in tasar cultivation. 'Arjun' seedlings meant as host trees for the silk worms were obtained from the Government Forest Department and planted by the villagers in their villages. Silk worm rearing for silk is a traditional occupation of tribal people. This forms a part of their culture. Tasar cultivation is closely interwoven with the religious beliefs, customs and rituals of the people. This year they experienced the promise of their first cocoon harvest at Sarnatoli.

Several tribals had received training in weaving and those who acquired proficiency applied for help to start their own weaving businesses and were supplied with a loom each and raw materials. Three weaving centres were set up to train more candidates.

RANCHI PROGRAMME—1980

AGRICULTURE

Area	—	233.30 acres
Villages	—	29
People	—	419

JOINT FARMING

Area	—	42.00 acres
People	—	239

LIVESTOCK

Goats	— 40	Villages	Families
Cocks	— 4	covered	covered
Eggs for hatching	— 99	15	50

WEAVING

Number trained	—	14
Number of looms	—	8
Production (value)	—	Rs. 15,031

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

Schools	—	2
Students covered	—	404

KINDERGARTEN

Number of villages covered	—	5
Number of students	—	124

SANTHAL PARGANAS— AGRICULTURAL INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (AID)

The Agricultural Integrated Development (AID) Project of NELC continued to meet the felt-needs of the people in Kaerabani and Dharampur areas. The programme is planned and implemented at the village level by the Committees set up in the villages whereas overall planning and monitoring rest with the AID Committee at the regional level.

The developmental activities of AID project with special emphasis on agro-services were undertaken in 60 villages covering a population of 60,000. The target groups, rural banks and the Government participated in the implementation of these projects.

Over 435 families in 54 villages cultivated high yielding varieties of paddy, wheat and vegetables on 332 acres of land. Of these 377 families have on their own taken crop protection steps covering 246 acres. During 1980, 10 irrigation wells and 14 tanks were excavated for irrigation purposes covering a population of 2,000. There was a 10% contribution by the target group.

700 young farmers have been trained in better agricultural practices through the Demonstration Farms and AID extension centres which have been established in the programme area. 30 women have been trained in midwifery. With the support of the Government, Gobar Gas plants have been set up, benefiting 100 people.

WATER SUPPLY

Drinking Water Well	—	1
Irrigation Wells	—	10
Tanks excavated	—	14
People covered	—	2,000
Participation (approx.)		LWS 90%
Target group		10%

AGRICULTURE

Land cultivated	—	332 acres
Villages covered	—	54
Families covered	—	435

Road construction 7.5 km.	—	3,100 people covered
Fencing wall— 800 mtrs.	—	200 people covered

Striking Water

The drought and scarcity of water felt particularly in the North Eastern region of India did not augur well the opening of the 'Water Decade' of the Eighties. But this glaring deficiency served as an impetus to step up efforts to increase water supply. LWS extended its water drilling operations from Purulia in West Bengal to the water starved areas of the States of Bihar and Orissa in the Districts of Santhal Parganas and Mayurbhanj respectively.

In March, 1980, reports from the Government of India revealed that 220 million people in 11 States were affected damaging crops worth Rs. 3,500 crores. Small and marginal farmers and landless labourers were badly hit. They suffered acute scarcity of drinking water and food grains and many were rendered unemployed.

Purulia District of West Bengal received during 1979 only 976 cms. of rainfall against a normal rainfall of 1250 cms. The drought persisted until June, 1980. It was a time of crisis. Ponds, rivers, tanks and wells were dry and the land surrounding parched and unyielding. People were subjected to extreme hardships and difficulties without drinking water. In order to obtain maximum yield and widest coverage of affected areas, the local Government, in consultation with the LWS and the PHED (Public Health Engineering Department) earmarked drilling operation sites for the rigs. In addition, trucks carrying drinking water for the people moved into remote villages as a temporary relief measure. For approximately 1½ months, an LWS support truck was also used for this purpose to provide water for the people of Neturia Block, one of the worst affected areas, having no permanent source of water supply. The Government provided G.I. tanks and men to assist in filling the tanks.

Out of a total of 129 wells drilled in Purulia 104 were successful and 25 dry. Progress was hampered to some extent due to non-availability of spare parts for the overhauling of the Rig and much needed High Speed Diesel oil.

The more positive aspects of the programme were the proper utilisation of the wells by the local villagers. In the villages of Rudhra, Lagdo, Manjuria, Chakra, Mutukdih and Palaskura the villagers were found cultivating onions, cauliflowers, brinjal, tomatoes and greens. However, though the villagers desired to grow summer vegetables they were unable to do so owing to lack of irrigation facilities.

Another important feature was the training acquired by 50 unemployed village youth in maintenance and fitting of the tubewells, at the two mini-training camps organised by the technical staff of the LWS at Raghunathpur and Arsha. With the increase in the number of tubewells their assistance in the repairs and maintenance of these wells would certainly speed up and supplement Government efforts. This training also enables these boys to obtain employment more readily.

LWS received during 1980 requests from the neighbouring State Government of Orissa to take up drilling operations in a bid to fight the severe drought experienced in this area. To cope with the extension of work projected in Bihar and Orissa a new Halco 625 was acquired and new staff employed. Thus from the middle of August, 1980 the WRP equipment and workers were set to the task of supplementing the emergency and rehabilitation activities of the LWS.

One of the drilling rigs was shifted to Dumka in the Santhal Parganas district of Bihar to help the NELC and the Government in their endeavours to provide potable water to the villagers. Out of 19 boreholes drilled in Santhal Parganas 17 were successful and 2 dry. A borehole with a 2,000 to 3,000 gallons per hour discharge helps to irrigate 4 acres of land benefitting at least 2 farmer families who can now earn an additional amount of Rs. 2,500/- per year from wheat cultivation alone.

A Well Revitalisation Unit was utilised to blast stones and boulders at Kaerabani in Santhal Parganas; exposed rocks found in paddy fields were also blasted thus clearing the cultivable area. The pieces of stones and boulders collected are used in construction of wells, etc.

The WRP shifted a team of 14 workers, a rig and support truck to Mayurbhanj District in Orissa in the middle of August, 1980. A target of 60 wells was envisaged. However, 59 were successfully drilled. This area which was reeling under the spell of severe drought welcomed the relief brought by water supply. Almost at every site villagers normally, poor Adavasi tribals, came forward with their headman to render any help they were able to give to the WRP crew.

WATER RESOURCES PROJECT

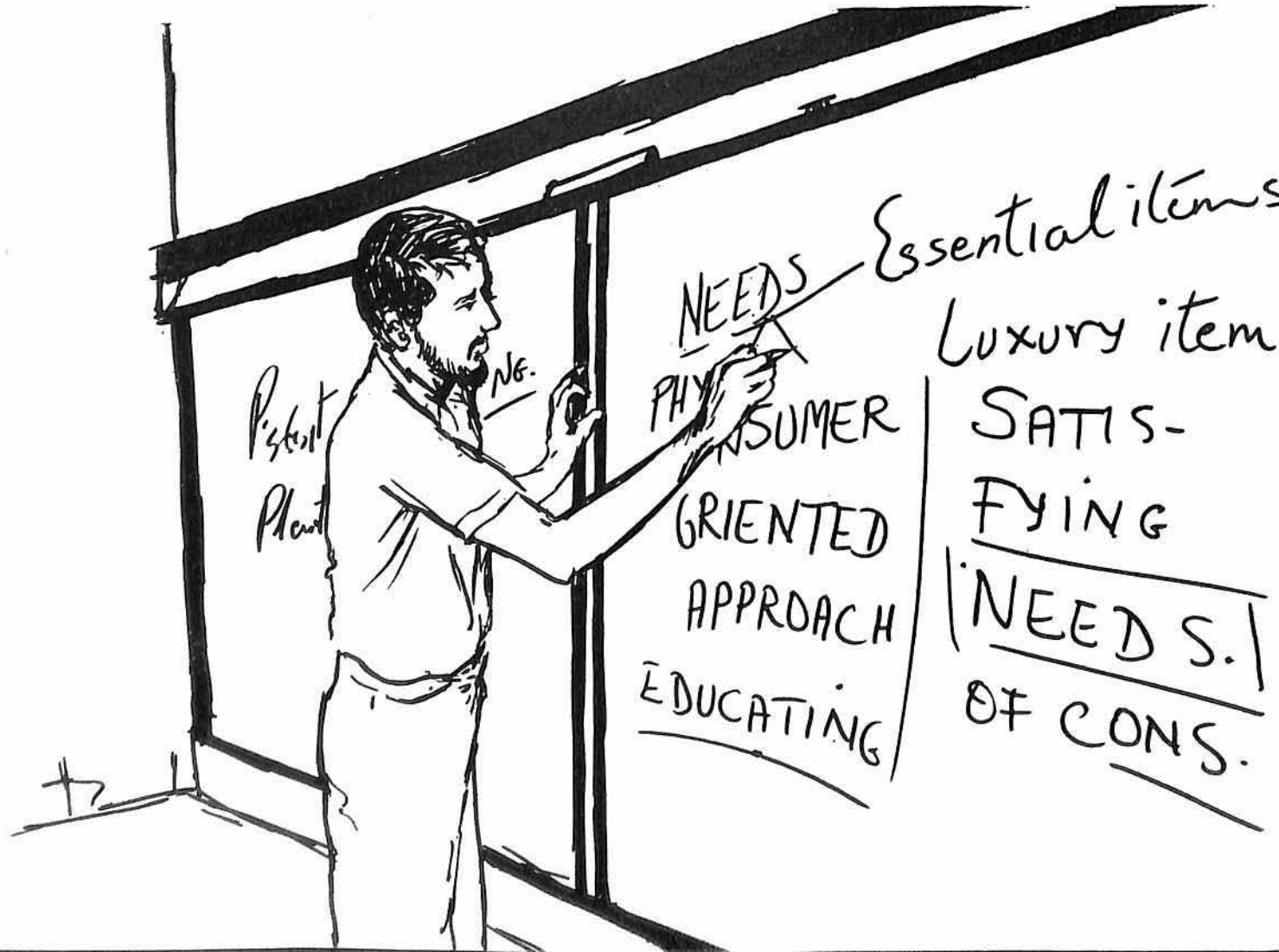
No. of Rigs in operation—2

	Purulia	Santhal Parganas	Mayurbhanj
Number of successful Bores	104	17	59
People covered	18,540	1,920	9,360

Strengthening the Linkage

DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

The Seminar programme of the LWS initiated in 1978 was channelled into a Development Communication Unit in 1980 by the inclusion of the Adult Literacy section under its wing. Development communication assists the target population and staff of the field programme to better understand the meaning of development in the context of the broad goals set out to be achieved by maximum utilisation of material and human resources in order to secure a better life for the people.



This 'communication' is undertaken by training programmes, seminars, workshops organised non-formally and/or through specialised Institutions for the benefit of the people.

During 1980, 13 programmes were arranged for different categories of people focusing mainly on their problems and needs and the manner of dealing effectively with solving these problems and meeting their needs on their own with available resources. In other words the emphasis by a continuous process of orientation and education is to motivate and to help them acquire skills, knowledge and attitudinal changes which could enable them to grow in self-reliance, by strengthening the people's organisation and gearing it to determine its own future.

The thrust of the training programmes has therefore been to equip the people :

- to increase availability of food by proper land utilisation through agriculture, irrigation, dry land farming, soil and water management, storage and pest control, horticulture.

- to increase income and improve nutrition—
  by employing scientific methods and principles in engaging in animal husbandry; goatery; poultry; fisheries; the cultivation of pulses and vegetables; bee-keeping; small and cottage industries; entrepreneurship.

- to develop group dynamics—
  in the field of decision making, organisation of the people; involvement of youth and women into society/group formations; in prevention of exploitation.

- to improve quality of life among women—
  by assisting them with programmes on home management, mother child care, health, sanitation and literacy.

- to manage Rural Institutions/ Organisations—
  by understanding the dynamics of marketing, cooperatives, panchayats, registered societies, youth clubs and women organisations.

These training programmes have been well received among the target groups. They understand the value and importance of the courses and the need for mutual cooperation and team spirit to achieve the development they seek.

The aim of the Adult Education Programme (for the age group 15-35) has been to improve and generate self-confidence, dignity, social values through simple education with due regard for the 'whole' person. It also seeks to co-relate education with basic needs and the means to attain the same. Furthermore it strives to ensure that the upcoming generation between the age group 6 to 14 does not relapse into illiteracy.

During 1980, 8977 neo-literates passed through the Adult Literacy centres. The course has been reduced from six months to four months and a new primer "Chhabi Dekhe Para" (Read Through the Pictures) has been introduced. A 'Mobile Packet Library' is distributed among the neo-literates to enable them to keep in touch with education.

Sl. No.	Subjects	Number of Participants	Conducted by
1.	Water Resources & Rural Development	115	AFPRO
2.	Motivational Training	7	DKVK
3.	Management of Rural Institutions	17	GSTC
4.	Management of Rural Development	20	IIM
5.	Dairy Management	3	DKVK
6.	Grass Roots Planning	31	XISS
7.	Sericulture	29	LWS
8.	Organising the Rural Poor	33	XISS
9.	Hobby Loom	23	SRSMS
10.	Fisheries & Marketing	10	KVK/TTC
11.	Social Workers	14	GSTC
12.	Agriculture	18	GSTC
13.	Poultry, Dairy & Goatery	9	GSTC
		329	

AFPRO : Action for Food Production
DKVK : Divyayan Krishi Vigyan Kendra
GSTC : Gram Sevak Training Centre
IIM : Indian Institute of Management
XISS : Xavier Institute of Social Service
SRSMS : Sarada Ramakrishna (Sishu & Mahila) Sevashram
KVK/TTC : Krishi Vigyan Kendra and Trainers Training Centre.

The Lamp of Learning ....

Kamalabehal Kenderdih Village in Saharjuri sub-centre has 40 families with a total population of 211. When this village was surveyed in early 1978 it was found that there were only three literates out of a total population of 207 recorded at that time. Again in August 1980 when the same village was surveyed, there were 34 adult literates—an increase in literacy rate from 1.45% to 16.11%.

How did this happen? A young male member of the community, *Prodhan Mardi* by name, had joined an adult literacy teacher's training course in April, 1979. Having successfully completed this course, he opened an adult literacy centre in his village soon after. He was supplied with the required books, slates and writing materials and an honorarium of Rs. 60/- per month. He convinced his people about the importance of learning to read and write and the practical usefulness of knowing simple arithmetic. He urged the adults to gather together every night at his house so that he could teach them and enable them to become literate. The people were successfully motivated to join the classes. Some of them even brought kerosene to light the lamps required for the purpose.

In December 1980 when this village was visited, the adult literacy teacher was asked how the people had for all practical purposes become literate. Without saying a word, he led us from house to house. In several of the houses we saw that the inner walls were used to keep accounts of their seasonal earnings from the fields. The outer walls were scribbled over with words such as 'Ma' and 'Pa'. It seemed that the people were consciously awakening to the advantages of learning and utilising their knowledge appropriately.

PLANNING RESEARCH EVALUATION MONITORING

The PREM Cell which is an Advisory Body to the Management Committee of the LWS evaluated the

- Housing Resettlement Programme,
- Calcutta Pavement School Project, and
- Purulia Project (Ajodhya Hills) Programme.

While the evaluation report of the housing resettlement programme was made available to the LWS during the earlier part of the year, the reports on the other two are still awaited.

The PREM Members drew up the Calcutta Action Plan as a model for Long Term Planning in cooperation with the LWS Calcutta staff.

PREM Members also visited the Sundarbans Project and attended PREM meetings in Calcutta.

The Community Health Consultant, Dr. Helen Gideon, visited the programme areas periodically and made specific recommendations for improvement of the Community Health work.

By the end of 1980 the general recommendation which has emerged from both the Community Health Consultant and the PREM Members, is their

(PREM CELL)

emphasis on integration of all sectoral programmes horizontally. The LWS hopes to give importance to this recommendation in 1981.

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Consultant and Adviser
Medical Programme

Mr. S. J. Nathan
Programme Secretary
LWS/India—Member-Secretary

IN A NUTSHELL

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME—1980

HOUSING

Programme Area	Number of families assisted
North Bengal	186
Purulia	264
Burdwan	125
	575

ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMME

Programme Area	Number of centres	Number of students	Number of neoliterates
Burdwan	27	1,546	1,037
Murshidabad	83	4,924	2,578
Nadia	5	222	96
Purulia	26	2,149	802
North Bengal	3	272	200
Santhal Parganas	107	3,992	1,765
Other Areas	77	3,264	2,519
Total	328	16,369	8,997

LIVE-STOCK DISTRIBUTION

Programme Area	Pigs	Goats	Poultry Birds	Dairy	Families covered	Villages covered
North Bengal	67	250	279	—	258	20
Murshidabad	1	210	20	4	194	16
Purulia	—	201	55	9	170	25
Ranchi	—	40	4	—	50	15
Burdwan	14	—	156	—	41	7
Total	82	701	514	13	713	83

WATER SUPPLY (TUBEWELLS)

Programme Area	Target	Number completed	Quantification of participation in value			Average sinking & material cost
			L.W.S.	Beneficiaries		
				Land	Labour	
Burdwan	22	22	61,356.72	—	—	2,788.94
Murshidabad	164	164	217,200.00	16,000	3,840	1,381.50
North Bengal	88	88	72,900.00	—	110	827.38
Total	274	274	351,456.72	16,000	3,950	—

WATER SUPPLY (OPEN WELLS)

Programme Area	Target	Wells Completed	In progress	Quantification of participation in value for wells completed			Average construction & material costs
				L.W.S.	Beneficiaries		
					Labour	Material	
Burdwan	18	11	7	77,000	—	—	7,000.00
North Bengal	22	8	—	19,285	—	—	2,406.89
Purulia	25	19	6	113,488	7,200	—	6,352.00
Santhal Parganas	15	11	—	84,300	8,100	—	8,400.00
Total	80	49	13	294,043	15,300	—	—

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORK

Districts	Small Pox	Double Antigen	Triple Antigen	Tetanus Toxoid		Malaria		Iron Tablets		Vitamin 'A' for presumtive treatment for under fives
				Mothers	Others	Slides examined	Presumtive treatment	Mothers	Under fives	
Purulia	242	6	49	56	66	2,403	5,194	194	535	69
Murshidabad	34	364	707	136	132	193	158	363	321	406
Burdwan	—	20	34	18	68	—	—	53	50	62
Calcutta	22	374	343	22	64	—	225	139	209	752
Total	298	764	1,133	232	330	2,701	5,577	749	1,115	1,289

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

Programme Area	Target	Schools Completed	In progress	Quantification of participation in value for schools constructed				Average construction cost	Students covered
				LWS.	Govt.	School Authorities			
						Land	Material		
Burdwan	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Murshidabad	10	10	—	367,000	11,100	67,600	4,942	38,304	2,079
North Bengal	16	12	—	455,330	—	38,400	22,190	39,793	3,596
Purulia	6	6	—	50,959	—	8,600	—	10,192	240
Ranchi	2	2	—	115,624	—	—	—	57,812	404
Total	35	30	1	988,913	11,100	114,600	27,132	—	6,319

LUTHERAN WORLD SERVICE
I N D I A

1980 STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURES IN US DOLLARS OF ALL LWS - DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

NAME OF PROJECT		US DOLLARS
PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION	...	151,121
PLANNING, RESEARCH, EVALUATION, MONITORING	...	14,257
WATER RESOURCES PROJECT	...	313,838
BURDWAN/BIRBHUM PROJECTS	...	201,818
PURULIA PROJECT	...	228,884
CALCUTTA PROJECTS	...	613,168
NORTH BENGAL PROJECTS	...	403,656
MURSHIDABAD PROJECTS	...	179,592
SUNDARBANS PROJECT	...	181,919
RANCHI PROJECT	...	146,073
REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT - SANTHAL PARGANAS	...	243,738
ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMME	...	70,024
SEMINAR	...	28,351
MEDICAL	...	49,697
NORWEGIAN WHEAT	...	97,404
NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID	...	69,497
TOTAL		2,993,037

ARC:mn

The Executive

Main Office:

Director	— Dr. Olav Hodne
Deputy Director	— V. S. C. Bonarjee
Finance Adviser	— E. Nielsen
Programme Secretary	— S. J. Nathan

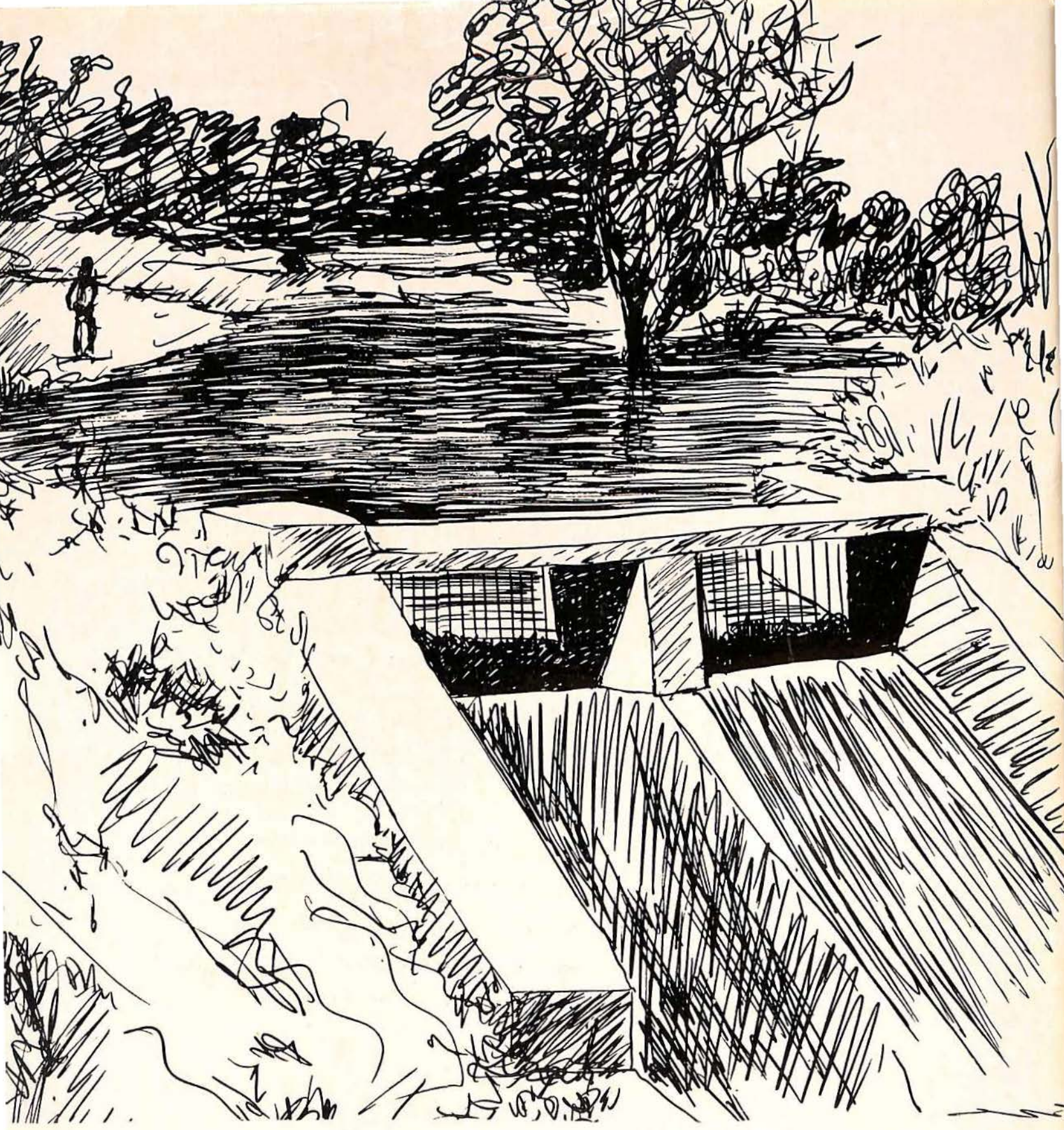
Programme/Project Offices (Development):

Burdwan/Birbhum	— T. K. Ray, *Field Administrator*
Calcutta	— N. K. Saha, *Field Administrator*
Community Health Work	— Dr. D. P. Sen, *Community Health Organiser*
Development Communication	— T. K. Ray, *Seminar Organiser*
	— P. C. Sarkar, *Chief Organiser*, Adult Literacy
Medical Programme	— Dr. K. S. Ray, *Medical Administrator*
Murshidabad & Nadia	— V. S. C. Bonarjee, *Field Administrator*
North Bengal	— S. C. Roy, *Field Administrator*
Purulia	— P. K. Ghosh, *Field Administrator*
Ranchi	— S. A. B. D. Hans, *Field Administrator*
Sundarbans	— J. Simon, *Field Administrator*
Technical Matters	— K. Roy, *Technical Adviser*
Water Resources Project	— D. Roychoudhury, *Coordinator*

Emergency & Rehabilitation Unit:

Emergency Officer	— P. C. Joseph
Finance Adviser	— E. Nielsen

Note: Emergency activities are covered under a separate report.



Operated by the Lutheran World Federation/World Service, Geneva

Designed and Produced by Lutheran World Service (India) and
Printed at The Radiant Process, Calcutta.